

Application No. 10/708,928
Amendment dated April 10, 2006
Reply to Office Action of February 8, 2006

Docket No.: 60680-1780

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A fastener assembly for coupling at least two components of an engine, comprising:
 - a threaded fastener having a head portion and a shaft portion;
 - a retention sleeve disposed about the threaded fastener; and
 - a wave spring disposed about the retention sleeve; wherein the wave spring has an inner diameter slightly larger than an outer diameter of the retention sleeve and wherein the fastener assembly acoustically decouples the components while generally maintaining a seal therebetween.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Original) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein the head portion of the threaded fastener includes a radially projecting collar.
4. (Original) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein the retention sleeve includes a radially outwardly projecting head flange.
5. (Original) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein the threaded fastener, the retention sleeve, and the wave spring are made of metallic material.
6. (Previously Presented) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein the wave spring abuts a portion of the retention sleeve such that the wave spring is selectively prevented from being fully compressed.
7. (Currently Amended) A fastening system for coupling at least two components of an engine, comprising:
 - a fastener;
 - a retention sleeve disposed about at least a portion of the fastener, wherein the retention sleeve includes a flange section and a necking portion that extends downward from the flange section; and

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a wave spring disposed about at least a portion of the retention sleeve;
wherein the fastening system acoustically decouples the at least two components while
generally maintaining a seal therebetween.

8. (Previously Presented) The system according to Claim 7, wherein the flange section has a circumferential extent that is greater than the necking portion.

9. (Previously Presented) The system according to Claim 7, wherein at least a portion of said retention sleeve selectively extends at least partially into an aperture formed in a first engine component, and wherein at least a portion of said retention sleeve selectively extends at least partially into an aperture formed in a second engine component.

10. (Previously Presented) The system according to Claim 7, wherein one of the at least two components of the engine is a valve cover.

11. (Previously Presented) The system according to Claim 7, further comprising a plurality of fasteners for coupling the at least two components of the engine.

12. (Previously Presented) The system according to Claim 11, wherein each of said plurality of fasteners is selectively interposed through at least one wave spring.

13. (Withdrawn) A method of reducing the magnitude of vibrations transmitted from a first component to a second component of an automotive engine comprising:
coupling the first component and the second component, at least in part, with a fastener;
interposing at least a portion of the fastener through a retention sleeve;
interposing at least a portion of the retention sleeve through a wave spring.

14. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of fastening the first component and the second component with a second fastener.

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15. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein the second component is a valve cover.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, further comprising the steps of interposing at least a portion of the retention sleeve, at least partially, into an aperture formed in the first engine component, and interposing at least a portion of the retention sleeve, at least partially, into an aperture formed in the second engine component.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, further comprising the steps of interposing at least a portion of the fastener, at least partially, into an aperture formed in the first engine component, and interposing at least a portion of the fastener, at least partially, into an aperture formed in the second engine component.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein the retention sleeve includes a radially projecting head flange.

19. (Previously Presented) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein a dimension of an inner diameter of the retention sleeve is less than a dimension of an outer diameter of the shaft portion.

20. (Previously Presented) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said retention sleeve selectively extends at least partially into an aperture formed in a first engine component, and wherein at least a portion of said retention sleeve selectively extends at least partially into an aperture formed in a second engine component.

21. (Previously Presented) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein at least one of the at least two components of an engine is a valve cover.